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# Smithfield Foods CEO Ken Sullivan to retire in early 2021

He will be replaced by Dennis Organ, the company's chief operating officer of US operations

By **Evie Fordham** | FOXBusiness

Meat processing giant Smithfield Foods announced on Monday its president and CEO, Ken Sullivan, will retire in early 2021 and be replaced by Dennis Organ, the company's chief operating officer of U.S. operations.

"It has been a great honor and privilege to lead Smithfield for the past five years," Sullivan said in a statement. "As a leading global food and agriculture company, we have an incredibly important role to play in society. It is an obligation we have proudly embraced over our more than 80-year history. We have persevered through an extraordinary time in 2020. Together, we have met unprecedented challenges head-on."

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Sullivan's first four years as CEO saw "the highest profit periods in the company's history," then the 2020 coronavirus pandemic interrupted what was shaping up to be a "record year," the company said in a press release. The pandemic rocked the meat processing industry as many companies' plants temporarily shut down and were criticized for not taking enough steps to keep workers safe from the virus.

Organ has been with the company since 2010.

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"I am incredibly thankful and excited to have the opportunity to lead and serve Smithfield," Organ said in a statement. "I want to personally thank WH Group for their

trust and confidence in me."

Smithfield Foods was founded in Virginia in 1936, and its pork products are ubiquitous in U.S. supermarkets. The company was bought by [China's](#) WH Group, formerly known as Shuanghui International, for \$4.7 billion in 2013.

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Smithfield became a subsidiary of the publicly traded Chinese corporation after the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) said the acquisition would not endanger national security.

The company has 55,000 employees in the U.S. and [Europe](#).

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